RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF
FUNDING FOR THE LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION

Adopted May 17, 2017

WHEREAS, the Members of the Knoxville Bar Association (the “KBA”) are committed to improve the legal profession and the community through programs to educate, communicate and serve; and

WHEREAS, the KBA’s purpose is and has always been to maintain high standards in the legal profession and provide legal education for Knoxville attorneys; and

WHEREAS, the KBA continues to support those basic principles, including public service which provides better access to legal services for all citizens in the Knoxville community through its Members, including private practitioners in firms of all sizes, government and legal services attorneys, senior and young lawyers, women, people of color, and other minorities; and

WHEREAS, the Legal Services Corporation (“LSC”) was formed in 1974 with bipartisan Congressional support to ensure that all Americans have equal access to legal services and the justice system, regardless of their ability to pay; and

WHEREAS, LSC is the single largest provider of civil legal aid for the nation’s poor; and

WHEREAS, LSC currently funds approximately 133 legal aid organizations with approximately 900 offices nationwide, serving every county, state, and congressional district in the United States and its territories; and

WHEREAS, Legal Aid of East Tennessee (“LAET”) is one of such legal aid organizations with LAET currently receiving approximately 50% of its total annual funding from LSC; and

WHEREAS, local programs funded through LSC provide direct legal services to approximately two million constituents with incomes at or below 125 percent of the federal poverty level based on past census data through community outreach presentations, pro bono referrals, and other legal assistance; and

WHEREAS, LSC grant programs such as the Pro Bono Innovation Fund have expanded initiatives that engage the private bar as a critical resource for supporting legal aid attorneys in addressing the civil legal needs of the low-income community; and

WHEREAS, over 60 million Americans, many of whom are children, may currently qualify for federally funded legal assistance; and

WHEREAS, LSC Justice Gap studies in 2005 and 2009 reported that one in every two individuals who qualified for and actually sought assistance from LSC-funded programs was denied help because of lack of LSC available resources; and

WHEREAS, clients of legal services organizations represent all ethnicities and ages, including the working poor, veterans, people facing foreclosure or evictions, families with children,
farmers, people with disabilities, domestic violence victims, natural disaster victims, and the elderly; and

WHEREAS, the 2017 initial federal budget of President Trump’s administration proposes the elimination of all LSC federal funding; and

WHEREAS, a broad coalition of bar associations has supported an increase in LSC funding, and the American Bar Association ("ABA"), the Tennessee Bar Association ("TBA") and many other national, state, local and specialty bar associations are mobilized to save LSC funding; and

WHEREAS, the KBA agrees with the ABA and TBA on this important funding issue and desires to publicly evidence such agreement through this statement.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the KBA:

1. Opposes any proposals to reduce funding for the LSC in 2017 and future years.
2. Calls upon Tennessee representatives and other representatives in the United States Congress and President Trump’s administration to restore LSC funding for the LSC in 2017 and to support increased funding in future years to help meet the urgent need of vulnerable Americans in need of legal assistance.
3. Authorizes its President, Board of Governors, and staff to communicate the content of this Resolution to its Members, affiliates and associate organizations, and to communicate the same to other Bar Associations, members of Congress, the Trump administration, the media, and others and to take steps to implement this Resolution, as they deem necessary.
4. Supports this Resolution as a policy priority until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent Resolution.

SECRETARY’S CERTIFICATE

I, Hanson R. Tipton, Secretary of the Knoxville Bar Association, a Tennessee non-profit corporation, certify that the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of the Resolution of the Board of Governors for the corporation, duly and regularly passed and adopted at a meeting of the Board of Governors duly called and held in all respects as required by law, and by the Bylaws of the corporation, at its office, on May 17, 2017, at which meeting a quorum of the Board of Governors was present.

Executed by me as Secretary of the corporation as of May 17, 2017.

Hanson R. Tipton, Secretary